NEWS

Door to door visits

FROM PAGE 1 officials have expressed doubt over success of the task, as the staff recruited are frustrated and unwilling to do the job without assurance of remuneration.

"There are some problems. But we hope they will be resolved soon." Secretary of the EC Secretariat Abdur Rashid Sarkar yesterday said referring to the finance minister's refusal to allocate fresh money for updating the voterlist.

About remuneration of the assis tant officials beginning the task today, he said they will be informed of remuneration within next Sunday or Monday.

Earlier on July 1, the EC began updating the voter list following a controversial procedure that requires the people seeking to include their names in the list to appear in person at the EC designated offices.

The finance minister's refusal to allocate any funds for the updating task has triggered frustration among the assistant officials and many of them are now refusing to do the job.

The teachers say they have got less than half of the remuneration for working on the fresh voter list over five months After the finance minister's remarks, they fear they won't get any money for the new assignment Assistant Registration Officer (ARO) Iftekhar Ahmed, also assistant head master of Dr Muhammad Shahidullah High School in Mirpur, told reporters vesterday.

Schoolteacher Aminul Haque

FROM PAGE 1

came from these areas.

clinics and hospitals in the city on

July 19 while 51 patients were

admitted the previous day.

been no report of deaths so far.

suburban areas.

aedes mosquito, has become a

major international public health

concern in recent years. The dis-

ease is found mostly in urban and

Dengue spreads

Bhuiyan, who was appointed ARO for Agargaon area, said he needs 20 assistant officials, but only three have agreed to do the task

However, the EC secretary said as yesterday, he was not informed of any difficulties in recruiting the man-"A total of 25, 211 assistant officials

have been recruited for Dhaka district." he said. Situation seems better in rural

officers also appointed as RO and ARO said they have completed the recruitment and are ready to start the work today.

"On instructions from the secretariat we are assuring the assistant officials that they will be given some money as soon as the funds will be disbursed from the secretariat." a district election officer told The Daily Star on condition of anonymity."

The assistant officials assigned to door-to-door visits will distribute forms for inclusion, deletion and correction of names on the existing voter list, which has a total of 7.64 crore voters.

reach on average 564 prospective voters.

number of assistant officials might be increased. When asked how many forms have been printed for the revision task, he declined to answer

FROM PAGE 1 including politicians, educationists, development workers, businessmen, entrepreneurs and cultural personalities took part in the eight regional dialogues styled "National

Committee to place their recom-

mendations before the two top

political leaders of the country. So,

the committee has compiled all the

recommendations for placing

eader arrange the appointments, a

Nagorik Committee delegation will

meet them and place the recom-

"We remember your efforts to

bring back a sound political practice

during the mass movement in1990.

We believe you will play a pivotal

role again during this political junc-

ture of the country," said the letter

signed by Nagorik Committee

Convenor Rehman Sobhan, joint

convenors M Saiduzzaman, Laila

Rahman Kabir and Abdullah Abu

Saveed, and Member Secretary

Street agitation

The 14-party combine wants the

dialogue to be confined to AL and

For the last few days, BNP

Secretary General Abdul Mannan

Abdul Jalil have been talking about

the possibility of a secretary-level

dialogue, but nothing has been

them to expect the movement for

Member Tofail Ahmed said, "It is

possible to force the government to

accept our demands even within

seven days and there are such

examples in the history of

Tofail said the people will never

Workers Party General

Secretary Bimal Biswas said,"There

will be immense pressure on the

accept any election before the

Asked whether it is realistic for

Debapriya Bhattacharya.

FROM PAGE 20

talks.

done to that end.

Bangladesh."

reforms are carried out.

After the PM and the opposition

before them, it added.

mendations

Election 2007: Civil Society Initiative for Accountable Development" in Mymensingh, Jessore, Comilla, Barisal, Sylhet, Rangamati, Chittagong and Rangpur.

All the participants sincerely want that the next national elections be held in a fair and reliable manner areas. Some of the district election and hope that a transparent and

strong democratic culture will be established, it said. The civil society letter mentioned that the participants of the regional dialogues advised the Nagorik

An assistant official will have to

Abdur Rashid Sarkar said the

Humanitarian disaster Citizens' body

FROM PAGE 1

Thousands of foreigners, mainly Westerners, were also being evacuated by sea from Beirut to the neighbouring Mediterranean island of Cyprus, fleeing an offensive that has now killed 327 people in Lebanon and displaced an estimated half a million others.

As Israeli warplanes swung into action over south Beirut, dropping 20 tonnes of bombs on a suspected Hezbollah leadership bunker ground troops were locked in fierce fighting with guerrillas after launchng a new cross-border raid.

The Israeli army said five soldiers had been wounded and claimed Hezbollah had lost two fighters, but this was not confirmed by the Shia militant group.

Israel said 20 war planes bombed what it believed to be a bunker full of Hezbollah leaders in the group's southern Beirut stronghold but Hezbollah denied any members had been killed and said the building hit was a mosque.

Israel has made no secret of its desire to "liquidate" Hezbollah's leader Hassan Nasrallah and has already launched air raids destroyng his offices and residence during its blistering nine-day campaign.

"The country has been torn to shreds. Can the international community stand by while such callous retribution by the state of Israel is inflicted on us?" Lebanese Prime Minister Fuad Siniora told a gathering foreign ambassadors.

"No government can survive on the ruins of a nation," said Siniora, who took office almost exactly a year ago heading the first largely anti-Svrian government since Damascus pulled out its troops in April 2005 after 29 years.

The international community was bracing for a humanitarian disaster in Lebanon, where food and medical supplies are running short because of an Israeli air and sea blockade and the bombing of the international airport and most roads out of the country.

"The most basic human rights of the population are at risk or are BNP would not leave out its allies being violated, including their rights to life, health and food," UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour said, warning that perpetrators in the conflict could be held to account for war crimes. International diplomatic efforts to

end the bloodshed have yet to get off the ground, with Israel's chief ally the United States refusing to back calls for a ceasefire until Hezbollah halts its rocket attacks.

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana were to meet in New York on Thursday with UN chief Kofi Annan, who has proposed the creation of an international force to restore calm.

"We will work very, very hard to see if we can have an end of hostilities and the beginning of something of a political nature before the end of next week," Solana told the BBC.

In the latest Hezbollah attack in Israel, two Arab Israeli children were killed and 37 people wounded when a Katyusha rocket exploded in Nazareth, the town where Jesus Christ grew up.

Another two Israeli soldiers were killed in border clashes Wednesday after troops went into Lebanon to conduct "pinpoint" operations against Hezbollah. One Hezbollah militant died in the shootout. Twenty-nine Israelis, including 14 soldiers, have been killed since a

Hezbollah attack on July 12 in which two soldiers were captured, triggerng the Israeli onslaught. Israel has vowed its "intensive

war" against Hezbollah would go on as long as it deemed necessary. General Alon Friedman said the

army sought to "destroy Hezbollah infrastructure and underground bunkers... and rocket supplies" and that enough troops were concentrated on the northern border to "allow a large-scale ground offensive if necessary

Israel, which has sent ground troops back into Lebanon for the first time since it ended its occupation in May 2000, has been emboldened by strong public support at home and the lack of a ceasefire call from its ally Washington.

But even in Israel, doubts were emerging about the effectiveness of an offensive that has failed to stop Hezbollah fire, eliminate its leadership or push fighters back from the border.

On Wednesday, Israel had waged a massive blitz from air and sea against southern and eastern Lebanon, flattening houses, destroying roads and hitting trucks. Twenty-five people were killed in one village alone

Saudis hint at \$400m Boucher

reforms to succeed in three months FROM PAGE 1 they have in hand, AL Presidium

said

potential buyers. The commission on May 7 approved the expressions of interest (EoI) submitted by the companies for taking over Rupali Bank

The chosen parties will submit their original price offers on August 8. During the meetings, the Saudi delegation inquired about the total assets of Rupali Bank, its liabilities, number of branches and employees. its management system as well as the profit repatriation rules and banking regulations in Bangladesh. The BB governor told the delega-

said there is also a great prospect for Rupali Bank if the buyer utilises its countrywide branches.

"The Saudi investors are convinced about Rupali Bank's prospect and have given a hint that they would spend about \$400 million," the source said, adding, however, that the bank has huge bad loans. The government owes Tk 1,100 crore to

Rupali Bank and it will be adjusted from the money earned after selling the bank. he said.

Corporation (Pvt) Ltd Bangladesh,

Meanwhile Israel continued its other deadly offensive in the Gaza Strip, kiling another two Palestinians on Thursday, bringing to 97 the number of dead since it launched an operation to retrieve a captive soldier and halt rocket attacks.

In Beirut, the exodus of foreign ers from Lebanon picked up pace, with Western nations increasing the flow of evacuations and other countries such as India and the Philippines starting to bring out their nationals.

US Marines were out in force to secure a port being used to evacuate American citizens from Lebanon to Cyprus, which lies just 160 km to the west and is being used as the evacuation hub

US evacuation task force commander Brigadier General Carl Jensen said his government hoped to have moved out more than 6.000 nationals from Lebanon. Britain is also hoping to evacuate about 5.000 of its nationals by the end of the week

For many ordinary Lebanese there is little chance of such a rescue and police said some 70 percent of the population of south Lebanon, which has borne the brunt of the Israeli operation, had fled their homes to find safer places.

The international airport has been knocked out, ports and roads bombed, bridges destroyed, power stations set ablaze and houses turned to rubble in scenes reminiscent of the country's devastating 1975-1990 civil war.

The European Commission announced it was doubling its emergency aid to around 12.6 million dollars while UNICEF was giving 7.5 million and the UN refugee agency was planning for a multimillion dollar operation.

Israel's offensive drew stinging criticism from The International Committee of the Red Cross, while US-based Human Rights Watch warned that border towns were facing series shortages of food and medicine.

FROM PAGE 1 He said the US would like to find new avenues of economic prosperity for Bangladesh and ways to fight terrorism and prevent terrorism take roots in Bangladesh.

Boucher would not, however, comment on Bangladesh's long effort to get quota-free access to the US textile market. "I can't, at this point, get into questions of textiles. can't make any promises in that regard," he said.

the prime minister's office yesterday evening to discuss the matter of Child workers striking teachers, ministry sources said

mented.

On the one-to-one dialogue between the ruling BNP secretary general and the AL general secretary on electoral reforms, proposed by the business leaders. Jalil said the proposal must come from the BNP as it can implement the

reforms. Jalil, also coordinator of the opposition line-up, urged the people to make the `road march' a success.

Party leader Amir Hossain Amu. Other leaders who spoke who chaired the meeting held at the included Abdur Razzak, Motia party central office at Bangabandhu Chowdhury, Obaidul Quader and Avenue, referred to the reported Hasanul Hug Inu, Bimal Biswas, dispute between the finance minis-Dilip Barua, MA Gani, Syed Zafor ter and the CEC and said. "This is Sazzad, Pankaj Bhattacharya and nothing but part of a conspiracy by Mostafa Mohsin Mantu were presthe alliance government to hold the ent. next elections under its blueprint.

And it proved that the CEC is a ruling Govt transfers coalition loyalist.' FROM PAGE 20 Amu demanded removal of the June 30, 2004, the job of the project CEC and his two 'politically'

consensus among all parties.

leaders of the districts adjoining

Dhaka to mobilise tens of thou-

sands of people for street agitation

to force the alliance government to

accept the opposition's reform

Speaking at the meeting, AL

proposals before its tenure expires.

General Secretary Abdul Jalil reiter-

ated that no election would be held

before the reforms are imple-

At a rally in Doel Chattar, Shikkhak-

Karmachari Oikya Jote led by Prof

M Shariful Islam yesterday urged

the government 'not to spend time in

of their representative at the Central

Shaheed Minar tomorrow where

they will announce 'tougher

demand -- providing 100 per cent

basic salary from the government

Bangladesh Shikkhak-

Karmachari Oikya Parishad yester-

day held a rally at the Central

Shaheed Minar where the leaders

urged the government to create an

'environment for discussion'

through declaration of 100 per cent

basic government salary for non-

The education minister called at

government teachers and employ-

The Jote will also hold a meeting

BSF enters

FROM PAGE 20

to be provoked.

FROM PAGE 20

programmes.

coffers.

ees.

Dialogue

the name of dialogue'.

the situation down.

14-party

"Through this new drama, the

alliance government is conspiring to

hold the next election as per its

blueprint," Tofail said at a prepara-

tory meeting ahead of the opposi-

tion combine's 'road march' from

July 25, attended by 14-party lead-

ers of Gazipur, Manikganj,

Munshiganj, Narayanganj and

Narsinghdi districts.

FROM PAGE 1 Member Tofail Ahmed said.

employees also ended at that time, appointed colleagues, and reconstithe ministry officials said. tution of the EC on the basis of a After completion of the project the employees demanded transfer The meeting asked 14-party

of their job to the revenue sector. At one stage the 722 employees under the project started demonstrations. They observed sit-in programme and hunger strike in front of the Directorate of Women and Children Affairs. They also announced to commit suicide on

July 23. State Minister Alamgir Kabir met them and persuaded them to withdraw their programmes by promis-

ing continuation of their job. Consequently, he placed a proposal to Prime Minister Khaleda A flag meeting was held in Panchbibi bordering area to calm Zia who gave her approbation for regularising their jobs under the revenue budget. On contact, BDR officials of 29

Battalion said they are following the movements of BSF carefully and RMG wage board FROM PAGE 20

are exercising utmost restraint not Worker representatives in the meeting placed a pay structure with seven grades, sources said.

> The workers are demanding a minimum wage of Tk 3,000 basic, which will add up to Tk 4,850 with house rent and other allowances while grade one total with all allow-

ances will be Tk 24.000. Garment owners and workers are at loggerheads over fixing a minimum wage for employees as the BGMEA is for fixing it at Tk 1,230 per month.

Another faction of the Jote led by The board will have to recom-Selim Bhuiyan will hold a grand rally mend a new pay scale for the workat Muktangon to 'compel' the govers within 90 days. ernment to meet their principal

Repair FROM PAGE 20

responsible for the accident at Banglai Shourabh, the state minister for shipping said.

The BSC MD, on the other hand, said they could not take any departmental action against the people responsible since they are yet to get the probe report on the June 24 fire incident at the 25-year-old oil tanker during its stay at Chittagong port's outer anchorage.

All the probe committees formed in this connection blamed violation of nternational maritime regulations operation by ineligible officers and consequent operational faults as the cause of fire at Banglar Shourabh that

officials concerned including General

Manager (ship repair), DPA, General Manager SPD for negligence and

failure to discharge duties as per the

nternational shipping manual that led

the personnel department gave

contractual appointment to a second

officer and a third engineer in the

tanker without having approval from

the higher authorities. The personnel

department also gave contractual

appointment to a retired officer of

Bangladesh Navy as an electrical

experience of working at a tanker vessel neither did any of them have

any certificate required for their

respective job, said sources quoting

None of the three persons had any

The reports further revealed that

to the accident.

engineer for it.

the report.

dissipated as the exchange of letters between the ruling BNP secretary general and AL general "Dengue outbreak is usually secretary stopped following a sharp seen during May-August, but last disagreement about whether to allow ruling coalition partner Jamaat-e-Islami in the proposed talks.

Around 408 patients were diag nosed with dengue in the last 22 Two hundred and twenty-three davs in the capital. Of them, 178 patients have died of dengue during have been discharged from the 2000-2005 and 19,551 dengue hospitals and clinics. There has patients were admitted to clinics and hospitals, a DCC report revealed. Dengue, a disease carried by

clinics, The Daily Star has found that the number of infant dengue patients is smaller this year than the previous years.

Although the number of dengue patients receiving treatment at hospitals and clinics was not alarming at the beginning of the rainv season, it has increased signifi-

cantly during the past few weeks. Dr Naseem-Us-Seraj, senior entomologist of DCC, said they have taken necessary measures to prevent the disease from turning into an epidemic by identifying the does Bangladesh stand among "high-risk" areas and spraying I DCs?

pesticides there. "We are sending people to the affected areas with pesticides to destroy aedes mosquitoes, which is responsible for carrying and spreading dengue virus," he said.

The DCC has chalked out an anti-dengue campaign and started to spray pesticides in eight of the 90 DCC wards from last Monday. It has assigned 10 people for each ward. The DCC has also organised programmes to create awareness on dengue by circulating leaflets and arranging workshops at schools and colleges.

The health minister, the DCC severely as most dengue patients mayor, several ward commissioners and civil society members held a The DCC keeps round-the-clock meeting on Thursday where they record of the number of dengue decided to launch the awareness patients admitted to hospitals and campaign, DCC sources said. clinics. The survey revealed that 31 patients were admitted to different

year we had dengue patients as late as on October 31. This trend of late departure of dengue may continue this year also," a DCC source said.

BNP to keep the anti-liberation forces off the discussion table. But Jamaat and Islami Oikya Jote from Surveying several hospitals and the ruling party delegation for the

Bhuivan and his counterpart in AL

FDI increases FROM PAGE 1

across the globe Centre for Policy Dialogue, a civil society think-tank, made the report

available at CPD office in Dhaka on behalf of Unctad CPD prepared an analysis based on the Unctad's report titled: 'Where

Releasing the report. Debapriva

said there is nothing to be excited in

attracting FDI in the country as

Bangladesh remained behind

Sudan, D.R.Congo, Myanmar,

has increased substantially in the

Ethiopia, Chad and Tanzania.

Rab arrests

FROM PAGE 20 ringleader -- opened fire on the Rab men at about 3:30pm.

"A gun-battle erupted as Rab also opened fire," a Rab official said. During the drive, suspected criminals Shukman, 35, was injured.

He was sent to Kushtia General Hospital. The elite force also captured two

other gang members -- Mohon, 37, and liaz 28 -- and recovered one pistol, two guns, one shutter-gun and several rounds of bullet from the spot, official sources said.

Galib's bail

FROM PAGE 20

of three witnesses. Khademul Azadul and Abdur Rouf, who sustained injuries in the bomb blast incident at Takier Bazar open stage drama. The three, however, could not

say anything about the involvement of Galib or others. Fifteen people were injured as

four powerful bombs exploded at Takier Bazar open stage drama under Palashbari upazila on the night of December 25, 2004. Palashbari police filed a case against 22 people in this connection.

Investigation Officer of the case Badsha Mia submitted charge sheet against six people including Galib exempting 16 others from the charge on April 27, 2005.

Besides, two powerful bombs were blasted on the rooftop of Mohimaganj Brac office under Gobindaganj upazila on the night of February 10, 2005, leaving three people injured

Investigation Officer of Gobindaganj Police Station submitted charge sheet against Abu Sajjat alias Raju Sarder and Habibur Rahman alias Jobayer, and exempted 20 people including Galib from the charge

The court fixed the next date of hearing for both the cases on August 20, 2006.

country are ignorant about the global perspective, he said noting that these people are trying to highlight their success instead of portraying the real picture.

Those who feel that FDI inflow

Apart from per capita FDI inflow, Bangladesh remains below the LDC per capita average in labour productivity in non-agricultural sector, adult literacy, electricity capacity and ICT infrastructure, mentioned Debapriya.

'These are very important areas in the economic development and many of our successes in other sectors may be faded due to the weaknesses in these areas," Debapriva explained

Unctad report FROM PAGE 1

director said, stressing the need for addressing the institutional weak nesses.

Diversifying exports, improving ICT and transportation infrastructure and investing in providing electricity to more people will also be some of the challenges for the country, he said.

According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (Unctad) report, the world's 50 poorest nations are urbanising without creating productive non-farm iobs.

> "They must find a way to foster viable businesses and expand nonagricultural employment when world markets are more competitive than ever and their own markets are wide open," the report added.

If this employment challenge is not effectively dealt with, there will be increased pressure on international migration to industrialised countries, it said, noting that without sustained effort to build the productive base of the poorest countries, it is also likely that there will be increasingly frequent humanitarian emergencies as well as associated

civil conflicts within the LDCs. Bangladesh, the most populous LDC, is contributing strongly to this trend, but the employment transition will affect more than half of the world's 50 LDCs this decade, and most of the remainder will follow suit between 2010 and 2020, it said.

There are 50 nations that are currently classified as LDC by the United Nations.

government from both the national and international communities to accept the reform proposals before its tenure ends.

He told The Daily Star that they might also bring tens of thousands of people from across the country to take part in an indefinite sit in programme in the capital.

Morshed

FROM PAGE 1 common rivers, trade deficit and the common border.

"We may not find answers to all these problems overnight -- but we are continuing discussions," he said.

Asked how he could say the relations are improving when Bangladeshis are being killed by Indian border quards. Morshed said it is not worsening as every border has problems. "No big incident took place between us and we've taken up the matter with India." "Trigger-happy people must

go...firing and smuggling must stop," he said.

He observed that smuggling through the porous 4,200 kilometres border is in many ways responsible for the BSF-BDR skirmishes and said this barter trade must be checked.

Asked about some Indian media publishing "hostile" news against Bangladesh, the foreign minister said. "We've decided not to speak through media as this does not improve relations. If there is any concern, we take it up through diplomatic channel."

During the briefing, the minister responded to a volley of questions on other issues as well--including Safta, the current situation in the Middle East. manpower export to Malavsia. Japanese foreign minister's visit to Dhaka and Bangladesh-US relations.

OCAB President Shamim Ahmad chaired the briefing while General Secretary Kadir Kollol made introductory remarks. DGEP Zahirul Hug and other officials of the Foreign Ministry were present.

Replying to manpower export to Malaysia, the foreign minister said Bangladesh is expected to send 300,000 guest workers to Kuala Lumpur in phases following the withdrawal of restrictions on the Bangladeshi workers by the Malaysian government.

tion that there is no obstruction to profit repatriation at present and also

no risk as there is surplus of current accounts balance, meeting sources sound," a source said. The delegation said if they buy the

bank, they will employ a higher management team from abroad. Rupali Bank's total assets, as

showed in December 2005, was \$1.07 billion and it has over 493 branches across the country.

Nine foreign banks are operating in Bangladesh with 41 branches and their total assets stand at \$2.11 billion.

After taxes and provisions, the National Housing Finance and foreign banks' net profit in FY05 was Investment Ltd, and FMO \$352 million, a Privatisation Netherlands Development Finance Commission source said. Pointing to the foreign banks' profit figure, he Company, who jointly sent their Eol.

Finance asks

FROM PAGE 1

(CEC) MAAziz last month disclosed that following suggestions from the law minister and the attorney general, they had continued the task of preparing a fresh voter list ignoring the January 4 High Court (HC) directives for revising the existing voter list.

The EC on July 13 and 19 also made the same claim at meetings with government officials the task of updating the voter list. Both the attorney general and the EC's counsel opined that there is no bar to preparing the voter list despite the HC directives. The law ministry approved their opinions, the EC

About the finance minister's demand for justifying the previous expenditure, the EC Secretary said they are ready to provide the ministry with any information about the previous expenditure.

"We hope, we will be able to convince the finance ministry that the expenditure was justified," he asserted.

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman on Tuesday refused to allocate funds again for updating the voter list and said the EC should have complied with the HC directives in preparing the voter list.

On Wednesday, Saifur asked the EC Secretariat to justify the previous expenditure for preparing and publishing the draft of the fresh voter declared illegal by list. the Supreme Court on May 23.

Sources said as the finance

FROM PAGE 20

"The Privatisation Commission 22.1 lakh establishments in 45 will sell the bank to the highest bidder targeted sectors in the country, 4.51 whose offer is also technically lakh or 20.3 per cent employ child workers.

Apart from the Saudi prince, the The total number of employees other short-listed bidders are Sabrie in the focused sectors were 16 lakh Capital Worldwide Ltd of Oman, of which 5.39 lakh or 33.8 percent Bank Muscat of Oman. State Bank of were child workers, found the sur-India, Maa International Investment Ltd of Malaysia, JJ Finance Ltd of the

The proportion of male child workers is much higher than female UK, and a group comprising child workers except in 5-9 age Domestic Investors Consortium, group. Summit Industrial and Mercantile

An estimated 52.6 per cent child workers were in age group 5-14 and 47.4 per cent were in 15-17 age group. Furthermore, 12.3 per cent child workers were in age group 5-11, 40.3 per cent were in age group 12-14 and 47.4 percent were in 15-17 age group.

However, the survey found four sectors that did not exploit child labour. The child labour-free sectors were ship breaking, cigarette manufacturing, manufacturing of pesticides and other chemical products and lastly, fire works.

The survey estimated that around 21.8 per cent of the child workers were abused at their work places. Of the abused child workers, 76.3 per cent were verbally abused or scolded and 16.7 percent were physically abused or beaten up by their employers.

The monthly average take-home earnings of the child workers were allocated Tk 59.87 crore for the EC Tk 939 while the monthly average special benefits in monetary value was Tk 549, as reported by the child workers.

> Almost 45 per cent child workers could not attend school because they could not afford educational expenses and 19.5 per cent of them could not go to school due to work.

Among the total non schoolgoing child workers, 9.8 per cent reported that their parents did not send them to school.

The survey also looked into the socio-economic background of the child workers and found that 62 per cent of them were literate; 11.7 per cent were currently attending school and 61.2 percent were below class five in schools.

About 31.1 per cent of their parents were self-employed, 22.4 per cent were day-labourers, 20.5 per cent were rickshaw or van pullers and 16.5 per cent were nonagricultural day-labourers

Criminal killed also left three people killed. The probe reports blamed the BSC

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custody. Rab members retaliated leading to a gun battle, Rab officials said

Ruhul was caught in the line of fire while trying to flee and died on the spot, the officials added.

Rab recovered a pipe gun from the spot. Ruhul's accomplices however managed to escape.

Local sources said Ruhul was a follower of a ruling BNP lawmaker in the area. He was also the secondin-command of 'Ruien Group' of Shanir Akhra.

Ruhul's sister Hamida Begum however told reporters at Narayanganj General Hospital, where an autopsy on his body was carried out, that her brother was innocent.

Iran rejects

FROM PAGE 20

The technology can, however, be extended to make weapons. Iran's failure to disclose its programme for nearly two decades aroused suspicions that it wants weapons and thus brought demands for a suspension

Several top officials have already threatened to prevent International Atomic Energy Agency inspections and even quit the NPT if the pressure mounts.

Last week Britain, China, France, Germany, Russia and the United States decided to send Iran's case back to the Security Council after Tehran failed to respond to their offer, billed as a way to guarantee Iranian access to civilian nuclear technology while preventing it from getting the bomb.

Tehran has repeatedly insisted that it is ready to negotiate, but at the same time has rejected any "preconditions" being imposed.

"Iran has welcomed the offer from the big powers, and the examination of it is continuing. This takes time, and the reply will be given on August 22," said the statement, billed by state television as an 'important announcement".

The Security Council members, arijani said, should "return to the negotiating table". "Certain parties, notably the

United States, have steered a path towards the Security Council by

putting obstacles in the way of negotiations," Larijani said. Larijani's statement in effect

repeated Tehran's oft-stated unwillingness to stop enriching uranium. It also came after the UN Security Council's five permanent members plus Germany have begun consultations -- so far inconclusive -- on a resolution that would make a suspension legally binding under international law.

Western countries have presented Russia and China with a text that would require Iran to suspend uranium enrichment and plutonium reprocessing activities.

"My instructions remain to get this resolution passed as soon as possible, this week if possible," the US ambassador to the UN, John Bolton, said on Wednesday.

Russia has also hardened its tone against Iran, with Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov signalling on Wednesday that Russia may agree to sanctions if Iran refuses to budge.

"If the first resolution ... doesn't work, we have agreed that after a period it will be necessary to discuss additional measures, including measures of an economic character," Lavrov told Echo Moscow radio

Secretariat to prepare a fresh voter list, and the task began on January 1. Disposing of two writ petitions on the voter list on January 4, the HC asked the EC to revise the existing voter list. But ignoring this, the EC continued preparing the fresh voter list and published its draft on May 3

at an expenditure of Tk43 crore. The Supreme Court on May 3 upheld the HC directives on voter list, dismissing the EC's appeal

against that. The EC secretary yesterday said that of the remaining Tk 16.13 crore, they spent only Tk 98 lakh in the process of updating the voter list and returned the rest to the govern-

ment exchequer. He however declined to disclose the amount of funds they now propose to the finance ministry for updating the voter list. " I can't disclose this because of the official secrets act," he said.

ministry vesterday asked for accounts of the previous expenditure, the EC Secretariat is now readying it. "We will submit the accounts to the ministry on Sunday," a senior EC official said on condition of anonymity.

At the press briefing, the EC secretary hoped that the prevailing crisis over funds for updating the voter list would be resolved by next week The finance ministry last year